

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 TRSE-00 CTME-00 SP-02 ICA-11

AID-05 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-07 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00

COME-00 FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

LAB-04 SIL-01 PA-01 L-03 /095 W

-----118949 210931Z /10

R 201557Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0803

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EI

SUBJECT: TRIGGER PRICE MECHANISM: IRELAND

REFS: A) STATE 172386; B) STATE 157105; C) STATE A-17

1. IRISH STEEL HOLDINGS LIMITED IS THE ONLY STEEL MILL IN IRELAND. THE PLANT INCLUDES: OPEN HEARTH FURNACE, ELECTRIC ARC FURNACE, 750 MM BLOOMING MILL, 650 MM SECTION MILL, 430 MM MERCHANT BAR MILL, 280 MM WIRE ROD MILL, AND HOT DIP GALVANIZING INSTALLATION. PRODUCTS ARE: INGOTS, BILLETS, BLOOMS, CHANNELS, ANGLES, MERCHANT BARS, REINFORCING BARS, GALVANIZED STEEL SHEET.

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PRODUCTION CAPACITY IS 100,000 TONS PER ANNUM, BUT THIS LEVEL HAS BEEN REACHED ONLY ONCE (IN 1973). IN 1978 PRODUCTION IS NOT EXPECTED TO EXCEED 60,000 TONS AND MAY FALL WELL BELOW THAT FIGURE. IRISH STEEL IS NOT EXPORTING TO THE US AND HAS NO EXPECTATIONS OF DOING SO IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

2. A NUMBER OF ENGINEERING FIRMS ARE INVOLVED IN THE MANUFACTURING OF SECONDARY AND TERTIARY STEEL PRODUCTS IN IRELAND. CONFEDERATION OF IRISH INDUSTRY SOURCES, HOWEVER, INDICATE THAT NONE OF THESE EXPORT TO THE US. CII OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT IRISH TRADE STATISTICS (WHICH SEEM TO COVER AISI CATEGORIES 1-32) SHOWING \$900,000 OF IRON AND STEEL EXPORTS TO THE US IN 1977 ARE DUE SOLELY TO TRANSHIPMENTS.

3. IRISH INTRA-EEC TRADE IN STEEL PRODUCTS IS, OF COURSE, SUBJECT TO ECSC STEEL LEGISLATION. NO OTHER INFORMATION ON PRICING IS READILY AVAILABLE, NOR IS DATA ON PRODUCTION COSTS.(MOST RECENT IRISH STEEL HOLDINGS LIMITED ANNUAL REPORT PUBLISHED SHOWS A PRE-TAX LOSS OF 1.3 MILLION POUNDS ON SALES OF 9.2 MILLION POUNDS FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1976). A DIRECT APPROACH TO COMPANY OFFICIALS WOULD BE THE ONLY METHOD OF OBTAINING THE COST DATA WHICH WOULD BE CRUCIAL TO ANY TRIGGER PRICE INQUIRY. GIVEN THE INSTRUCTIONS IN REF A WE ARE REFRAINING FROM SUCH AN APPROACH. MOREOVER, WITH THE LACK OF IRISH EXPORTS TO THE US THERE WOULD BE LITTLE INCENTIVE FOR OFFICIALS TO RELEASE SUCH SENSITIVE INFORMATION AND ITS VALUE WITH RESPECT TO THE TRIGGER PRICE MECHANISM WOULD, AT ANY RATE, APPEAR TO BE MINIMAL. SHANNON

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